

terrorism presents to the United States and to the world today as there was back in the 1960s and 1970s about the Communist regimes throughout the world.

There is much work to be done if we are to find freedom and liberty for more people. Freedom and liberty cannot live together in the same world as terrorism. We are finding that out. What the world is going through right now is a decision process: Are we going to accept terrorism, or are we going to root terrorism out? Are we going to have liberty, or are we going to have tyranny? This is one of the most important discussions in our history because at this point terrorism has the potential to be spread worldwide.

Terrorism has as its main focus instability. The terrorists understand they could not militarily defeat the United States. Their attempt was to destabilize us financially. On 9/11, the high estimates are that over \$2 trillion worth of losses occurred in the U.S. economy. \$2 trillion represents almost 20 percent, Mr. Speaker, of our total economy. How many countries could have suffered that kind of loss and still bounced back with an economy where we could be concerned about the production of jobs? \$2 trillion and over 3,000 lives in one split second. That is what happened on 9/11.

If the terrorists are not defeated at every turn, they have stated their intent to get vials of disease, to unleash chemical weapons, to unleash nuclear weapons. Whatever it takes to defeat freedom, they are willing to do. Those attacks on freedom are going to continue to be targeted at the United States first because they realize that this country is the heart and soul of freedom worldwide, that this country is a shining light of liberty to those countries that would aspire to it.

Mr. Speaker, we can make no mistake. We must choose sides in this. We cannot appease terrorists. We cannot act like it will get better. We have read into the RECORD earlier tonight an entire list, two pages, double-spaced, of attacks into the United States or to United States troops by terrorists. Mostly those went unresponded to, but President Bush made a bold decision that we will take the fight to the terrorists. He should be commended for his activities, Mr. Speaker, because it is that boldness that has forestalled any future attacks.

The investments in homeland security, the investments in our defense have been somewhat successful. I agree with the 9/11 report, though, that says that any President should promise the American people that we cannot fight a defensive battle all of the time. That is the reason I favor taking the fight to the terrorists. We must take the heart out of the fight for them. We must take the will to damage this country away from the heart of terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, the 9/11 Commission report gives us valuable information about this Nation's lack of prepared-

ness, the lack of preparedness that extended across more than one administration. I would recommend that Members of this body on both sides of the aisle begin to discuss the findings of the 9/11 Commission, that commission which stated that there is a link between al Qaeda and Iraq, that there was no preoccupation with Iraq as far as President Bush is concerned, and, finally, that we must either kill the terrorists or accept that they are going to kill us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HENSARLING). The gentleman from New Mexico will suspend.

PRESERVING ABILITY OF FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION TO INSURE MORTGAGES

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 2712) to preserve the ability of the Federal Housing Administration to insure mortgages under sections 238 and 519 of the National Housing Act, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill, as follows:

S. 2712

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT TO GENERAL AND SPECIAL RISK PROGRAM ACCOUNT.

Under the heading "FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION—GENERAL AND SPECIAL RISK PROGRAM ACCOUNT" in title II of Division G of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2004 (Public Law 108-199), in the first proviso, strike "\$25,000,000,000" and insert "\$29,000,000,000".

The Senate bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on the Senate bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

9/11 COMMISSION REPORT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) may continue not beyond midnight.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to touch upon a couple

of points that the gentleman from New Mexico brought up. One of them I think that is fascinating is the fixation in this country to try to split hairs between what is a collaborative tie between Iraq and al Qaeda or what is, I suppose, called a casual tie between Iraq and al Qaeda. Or whether or not because al Qaeda may or may not have been involved in Iraq to a great extent but other terrorists were, it still was unjustified.

It seems to me, and I can only speak for myself on this, if a terrorist kills me, it is not really going to matter to me whether he was al Qaeda or whether he was some other group that was housed in Iraq or anything else. It is going to seem to me that, assuming I am looking down as opposed to looking up, I would ask the question why nothing was done. Have we become that legalistic in this country, that formalistic, that blind to the reality around us that we do not understand that if a dictator hates you and a terrorist hates you and they have ties, it does not bode well for you?

I think that is just something that has grated on me for quite some time, how we tend to intellectualize things without seeing the reality, behind the sophistry of the arguments. It is much like the approach that many wish to take towards terrorism. Many in this country believe that you can cleanse the criminal by deeming it political. A murder is a murder. Kidnapping is kidnapping. Extortion is extortion. It is an inherently, intrinsically evil act. The goal for which one engages in the intrinsically evil act does not change its nature, does not justify it.

So when we hear many in the international community trying to justify the actions of the terrorists based upon years of colonial occupation by European powers, I reiterate European powers, or we hear that there are underlying root causes, many of which are valid root causes but no justification for the act of terrorism, we have to be clear in our minds, because as I said before, every single American today is under attack from the terrorists. The act of killing our fellow citizens or kidnapping and killing our fellow citizens or kidnapping and killing other citizens of this world is designed to prey upon our minds, so that we believe that we cannot prevail, that we tend to doubt that people wish to breathe free, that they wish to love their children, that they wish to grow old, that they wish to savor the gift of life from our Creator.

Some would have you believe that there are people in this world that are unfit for democracy, that they would say they can never take to this forum, that it cannot be imposed from above. I believe that the thirst for democracy, the thirst for freedom, comes from within, and that what we as a Nation have done is created the conditions in which their own yearnings can be expressed and their own futures be determined, and then can they live in freedom. I think that if you come from

that perspective, it is easy. It is difficult to miss the reality in Iraq which proves my point about the terrorists trying to prey upon your mind. There are 25 million people in Iraq.

The reason the terrorists are engaging in individual suicide bombings, in individual kidnappings, is because you do not have millions of Iraqis fighting with their new government to return to the days of Saddam Hussein.

□ 2340

We do not see organized armies of Iraqis out in the field en masse trying to overthrow the transitional government and replace it with a terrorist regime. What we see every day in Iraq is what we try to do here: Iraqi citizens trying very desperately to live normal, happy lives. They want to take their children to school.

Let me just stress this. In this country when people take their child to school, they generally feel safe that their child will be in a stable environment, will be educated, will return to their loving arms. Put oneself in a position of an Iraqi parent today, and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) and I were there at the time of the so-called days of national resistance when the first place they put the fliers threatening to kill people were around the schools so the parents would not take their children to school. We see an Iraqi parent, they have to take their child to school with the threat of terrorism around them every day in a magnitude we have yet to experience. We see them dropping them at the schools, under threat of death for doing so, and then praying that their child comes home to them.

And yet many in this world will say that these are people unfit for freedom. They are no different than we are. I think it was President Kennedy that put it best: We all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future, and we are all mortal.

To our fellow human beings in Iraq, we cannot offer condescension. We cannot offer derision. We must continue to offer assistance so that they can breathe free, so that their internal thirst can commence upon a quest for freedom in their lifetimes.

And probably one of the things I will always remember from Iraq, as we were leaving, we were getting on the Black Hawk helicopters to leave the Green Zone for the final time. It was Halloween, and there was an American soldier with a small Iraqi child, maybe 8 or 10, and he had little Dracula fangs he was playing with and smiling at the American soldier. That to me expressed the hope for Iraq, that that child who has been inoculated, who has been given an opportunity to go to school, whose parents have a chance to seize his freedom, that child is the future of Iraq, and we cannot turn our back on that child.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments again.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would note that during this week we were allowed and privileged to hear the Deputy National Security Adviser. He commented that much of Iraq is still very stable. Always when the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER) and I were in Iraq at the end of October and the first of November, it appeared that about 75 percent of the country was very stable, that there were areas of difficulty in Fallujah, Mosul, that there were areas of problems but that most of the country was doing exactly what the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER) said. People were trying to live normal lives.

As we drove up and down the highways, it was obvious that we were Americans. We had American flags on the convoy. We had armored vehicles. We were in armored vehicles, and yet there were no signs of obvious dislike or distrust of the Americans. People just seemed to be living their lives. Occasionally we would give waves. No overtly aggressive actions were taken toward us. Small kids sometimes waved and gave us the thumbs up. But that is the picture now of Iraq now under the transitional government, that people are trying to get out and live their lives, and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER) pointed out very well that while we were there they brought in fliers and showed us that these days of national resistance, if they take their child to school, they will either kill them or blow the school up. People still were selecting to send their kids to schools. About 50 percent of the school kids went that day with those difficult threats about them. Different fliers announced, Do not go shopping, Do not go into the business district today or we will kill you there. And yet the Iraqis, in trying to live normal lives, normal lives where they could expect to come and go, normal lives of freedom, the things that we take for granted and have somewhat become complacent about in this country that they are doing under the threat of death day in and day out.

So to find this transitional government operating actually quite well, we were actually able to hand the power over to them a couple of days early, and in fact many of the ministries were operating even before the handover date. By a couple of weeks they had already been operating. So we find the stability of the transition to be remarkable, and what we are finding also, according to this Deputy National Security Adviser, is that the Iraqis are buying more into the need for them to be out on the frontlines, and as they provide security in their neighborhoods, as they provide border security, they are able to do it better because the United States is not under the tremendous pressure that the international community would bring, and the Iraqis do not face that same pressure either. The Iraqis can act more decisively. They can act with more abruptness. They can act with far more

retribution than what the Americans could do, and there is an acceptance in the international community when the Iraqis act in that fashion.

So, Mr. Speaker, if this country will maintain its resolve, if both sides of the debate will begin to discuss the actual truth instead of what they would like to be true, then, Mr. Speaker, we can win this war on terror.

One of the things that I think is very critical is for the media to begin to discuss it truthfully. The media has had it correct back as far as 1999. Many in the news media were publicly reporting the ties between Iraq and al Qaeda. It was only under President Bush, when they decided that they wanted to be against him, that they wanted to discredit him at any cost, that the media began to change their story. Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the media would take a look at the 9/11 Commission, that they would put that beside the Senate Select Committee, which had many of the same findings. I would hope that the news media would compare it to the Butler report on British intelligence and begin to report the truth, that this is indeed a war on terror, that this is indeed the war on terror that is going to determine the outcome of world history.

Mr. Speaker, the media had it right back in 1999. Newsweek Magazine ran an article on January 11, 1999, entitled Saddam + bin Laden? It read in part: "Saddam Hussein, who has a long record of supporting terrorism, is trying to rebuild his intelligence network overseas, assets that would allow him to establish a terrorism network. U.S. sources say he is reaching out to Islamic terrorists, including some who may be linked to Osama bin Laden, the wealthy Saudi exile accused of masterminding the bombing of two U.S. embassies in Africa last summer."

Mr. Speaker, ABC News on January 15, 1999, also had a report in which they acknowledged the links between Iraq and al Qaeda, and yet now they are claiming that there is no link. But on January 15, 1999, ABC News said: "Intelligence sources say bin Laden's long relationship with the Iraqis began as he helped Sudan's fundamentalist government in their efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction." This according to ABC news. It goes on to say that "ABC News has learned that in December an Iraqi intelligence chief named Faruq Hijazi, now Iraq's Ambassador to Turkey, made a secret trip to Afghanistan to meet with bin Laden. Three intelligence agencies tell ABC News they cannot be certain what was discussed, but almost certainly, they say, bin Laden had been told he would be welcome in Baghdad."

Those findings are similar to the findings of the 9/11 Commission that I reported on earlier in this discussion tonight.

Another well-reported article and news source, NPR reporter Mike Shuster reported in an interview with Vincent Cannistraro, who was the former

head of the CIA's counterterrorism center.

□ 2350

Mike Shuster reports on NPR that Iraq's contacts with bin Laden go back some years to at least 1994 when, according to one U.S. Government source, Hijazi met with him when bin Laden lived in Sudan. According to Cannistraro, Iraq invited bin Laden to live in Baghdad to be nearer to potential targets of terrorist attack in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Some experts believed bin Laden might be tempted to live in Iraq because of his reported desire to obtain chemical or biological weapons. CIA Director George Tenet referred to that in recent testimony before the Senate Committee on Armed Services, when he said bin Laden was planning additional attacks on American targets.

Mr. Speaker, the news media has had it correct in the past. I earnestly hope that they will return to the truthful reporting of the past and give this 9/11 report the hearing in front of the American people that it deserves. The American people need to know the truth, and the news media needs to be certain that the American people should and will know the truth, whether or not it comes from them.

Mr. Speaker, again, I would begin my wrap up comments by saying that Mr. Berger's removing of documents from the archives absolutely appears to have been criminal contact. I would recommend that this body and all other bodies responsible look into these sorts of illegal activities, to bring this to the highest level of examination.

Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that Mr. Berger wanted to take documents, some of which he has not returned, some of which supposedly have been destroyed. Mr. Berger needs to be held accountable for the illegal activities that he conducted while he was working with the Kerry campaign. I think, Mr. Speaker, that the Kerry campaign needs to also be very straightforward with the American people about their association with Mr. Berger.

Mr. Speaker, I would offer one last time to yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Mexico for yielding.

I would just like to conclude with an observation and a question. When we last participated in special orders, I asked the question about where is the opposition's plan for dealing with terrorism? Where is their plan for reconstructing Iraq? Where is their plan essentially to protect the national security of the United States, whether they would delegate it to the United Nations or keep it where it remains, here in the bosom of the sovereign people?

Well, I got kind of an answer, and I guess maybe this is what passes for planning these days, it seems to me more a statement of the obvious, that part of the opposition's plan was that

they would, with sufficient evidence, preemptively take out terrorists.

Well, I am glad that they concur with part of the President's plan. But that is not necessarily the in-depth approach that we need at the present time. Maybe the forthcoming week will show us more.

My observation along those lines is perhaps more of a frustration, that many people today are saying that America needs international support if we are to stand with the Iraqi people. We all know we would enjoy international support. But what I find galling is they will then turn around and say they are most capable of building the international support for the coalition to help reshape Iraq and help defend the United States. But, in the process of doing that, they have done something very interesting, is that they have denigrated as coerced, as distorted, as bribed, quote-unquote, the allies we have abroad as part of our coalition whose children, whose young men and women, are fighting beside our soldiers in Iraq and who are dying.

Now, I am a liberal arts guy, I was not a math guy, but it seems to me that if you attack and denigrate your own allies, it is very difficult through subtraction to build a larger coalition, especially when one is going to rely on people who have adversarially tried to undermine the United States' effort and our coalition partners' efforts in Iraq. I am thinking of many people in the United Nations who during the Oil For Food scandal were not necessarily in the best position to tell Saddam Hussein, who they were in league with and making money off of, to try to follow the resolutions they passed regarding weapons of mass destruction.

So I would just ask people to consider whether someone may or may not hypothetically be fit to be the Commander-in-Chief of the United States who, during a time of war, denigrates our allies and courts our adversaries. There is no simpler way to put that, because that is absolutely true. Ask yourself that question.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank you for your tolerance in allowing us to speak tonight about this very important subject, that of understanding the tie between Iraq, al Qaeda and the international war on terror. It is the most significant thing that this generation faces. We are either going to leave the world more safe, or we can leave the world without freedom.

Mr. Speaker, it is up to this body, it is up to this government, it is up to this President, and it is up to the American people. We must decide. We are going to decide this year which way we are going to pursue this particular war on terror.

Mr. Speaker, I would request humbly that all of the citizens, all of the people throughout this country, and especially the people in this body, would give that discussion their fullest attention and arrive at decisions, so we can

explain to the next generation that we took the responsibility and handled that responsibility wisely.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. KIRK (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today after 12:00 p.m. on account of traveling with the President to his district.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. SCHIFF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. McDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BLUMENAUER, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. HERSETH, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. HENSARLING) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BEREUTER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BOEHLERT, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at their own request) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. KINGSTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ROHRBACHER, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE BILLS REFERRED

Bills of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2249. An act to amend the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act to provide for emergency food and shelter; to the Committee on Financial Services.

S. 2724. An act to amend section 33(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657c(a)) to clarify that the National Veterans Business Development Corporation is a private entity; to the Committee on Small Business.

S. Con. Res. 130. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the Supreme Court of the United States should act expeditiously to resolve the confusion and inconsistency in the Federal criminal justice system caused by its decision in *Blakely v. Washington*, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Mr. Trandahl, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1914. An act to provide for the issuance of a coin to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Jamestown settlement.